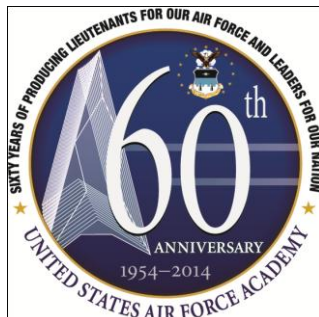


FALCON FAMILY NEWS

August 2014



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USAFA'S PUBLIC CALENDER Link: (Managed by the Association of Graduates.)

<http://www.usafa.org/Calendar/Events>

CLASS STATISTICS (as of 31 July 2014)

Class Year	Men	Women	Total
2014	9	4	13
2015	680	188	868
2016	662	190	852
2017	833	251	1084
2018	896	248	1144
WING	3080	881	3961

❖ These numbers include international students.

THIS MONTH IN AIR FORCE ACADEMY HISTORY—HAPPY 60TH ANNIVERSARY—1 APRIL:

1 August 2008 -- General Norton Schwartz, Class of '73, becomes the third Air Force Academy graduate to serve as Air Force Chief of Staff.

2 August 1909 -- The U.S. Signal Corps accesses its first aircraft, a Wright brothers product. The aircraft, "Signal Corps Aeroplane Number 1," is currently on display at the National Air and Space Museum.

6 August 2006 -- Cadet squadrons 37, 38, 39, and 40 are reactivated. The four squadrons had been deactivated in 1999 as the number of authorized cadets was reduced. The return of the squadrons provided expanded leadership opportunities for cadets.

8 August 1948 -- At the request of Secretary of the Air Force, W. Stuart Symington, a conference of fifteen civilians and officers is convened to establish guidelines for an air academy. The group is led by General Muir Fairchild, the vice chief of staff (and future namesake of the Academy's academic building).

8 August 1980 -- A new voluntary Academic Honors Program is initiated, centering on the core curriculum. It was put into effect for the Class of '82 and subsequent classes.

11 August 1977 -- Academy officials concur with an Air Staff proposal to increase the active duty service commitment for Undergraduate Pilot Training graduates from five years to six years. The change would become effective in June 1979.

30 August 1958 -- Members of the Class of '62, having completed Basic Cadet Training at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, are bussed to the north entrance to the permanent Academy site. Led by upperclassmen and Air Training Officers, and with 400 cadets lining the route, they march the 4 ½ miles to the Cadet Area, finishing by marching up the ramp. Construction continues throughout the campus. (Source: Falconews, 28 August 1959 issue).

UPCOMING DATES 2014/2015:

12 Aug Commitment Dinner (Class of 2016) 1730 – 1900 hours

13 Aug New Semester Classes Start

29 Aug – 1 Sept Parents Weekend

<http://www.usafa.edu/superintendent/parentsweekend/index.cfm?catname=Parents'%20Weekend>

19 Sep 14 Air Force Birthday Ball (Class of 2018)

30 Sep Major's Night (Class of 2018)

31 Oct 14 Halloween Dance (Optional all classes)

25 Nov – 30 Nov	Thanksgiving Break LMD. Cadet Wing returns 7:00 pm on 30 Nov 14
15 – 19 Dec 14	Finals
20 Dec – 4 Jan 15	Winter Break Cadet Wing returns 7:00 pm on 4 Jan 15
20 Mar - 29 Mar 15	Spring Break (Last Military Duty [LMD]). Cadet Wing returns 7:00 pm on 29 Mar 15
13-14 Mar 15	Recognition
11-15 May 15	Finals
28 May 15	2015 Graduation

Air Force Times Articles:

Air Force Times reporter Steve Losey spent a week at USAFA and embedded for a couple of days in Basic Cadet Training in Jack's Valley. Below are two of his stories.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20140811/NEWS/308110014/Getting-tough-How-Air-Force-primers-its-future-officers>

Getting tough: How the Air Force primes its future officers
Aug. 11, 2014 - 07:52AM |

Basic cadets perform extra physical training as ordered by their instructors for an infraction during Basic Cadet Training in Jacks Valley. (Mike Morones / Staff)

By [Stephen Losey](#)
Staff writer

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. — The future leaders of the Air Force stood at attention on the Air Force Academy's main pavilion on a bright July morning, ready for 11 days that would change their lives.

Most of them are 18-year-olds fresh out of high school — who likely had their pick of colleges to attend. Their choice was a life of military discipline, pre-dawn wakeups, and hours upon hours of physical training. With them are 61 prior-enlisted airmen, now cadets, who have chosen to become officers, and yet a third round of basic training.

The 1,160 basic training cadets of the Class of 2018 are the next generation of Air Force majors, colonels and, chances are, even generals. Academy graduates make up 23 percent of the Air Force's overall officer ranks, and 46 percent of the service's general officers. Seven of the 11 current Air Force four-star generals — including Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh — graduated from the academy, as did three previous chiefs of staff.

Over the next nearly two weeks, the cadets would endure the second phase of basic cadet training, nicknamed Second Beast, and learn — much like their enlisted counterparts at basic training — what makes an airman. The difference is, these officers-in-training would combine their grueling physical training with lessons on how to lead, motivate and discipline the airmen they will soon supervise, in times of war and peace. Their training would include things as simple as memorizing each others' names and figuring out how to set up tents together, to more challenging problem-solving courses, to besting the dreaded assault course.

“Second BCT is all about developing the warrior ethos in the basic cadets,” said Cadet 1st Class Nate Peeler, a 21-year-old rising senior and basic cadet training cadet group commander, who oversaw the entire training effort. “It’s putting them in these stressful situations where they can lead each other, but also a challenge where they can take pride in what they’ve accomplished.”

When the basics' field training concluded Aug. 1, all but 13 returned to the main campus. But getting to that point would be a hard journey.

Reveille

It was 4:45 a.m. on July 22 — time for reveille — and Bravo flight, Barbarians squadron was about to be late.

The cadet cadre leaders — upperclassmen who lead the basics — milled around in the pre-dawn chill of Jacks Valley, quietly chatting with one another. Then, on cue, they blew whistles, sounded a bullhorn siren, and began yelling for the Barbarians to fall out of their tents and begin their second day of field training, also known as Second Beast. “Get your [tent] flaps up!” one cadre member said. “Pants on, flaps up!”

Their neighbors in Aggressors squadron were already up, dressed and on their way to their morning physical training. Some of the Barbarians were also ready, but others weren't. The cadre ordered the already-up Barbarians to get down in a front-leaning rest in the dirt hallway between rows of tents and begin chanting, to guilt the stragglers into hurrying up and joining them: “SIR, WE ARE WAITING ON OUR CLASSMATES. SIR, WE ARE WAITING ON OUR CLASSMATES.”

It worked. The remaining Barbarians soon emerged in their airmen battle uniforms and joined their squad mates for pushups. Their cadre leaders then had them start counting off, one by one. When they reached 18 — to mark their class year — only a few weakly muttered their class slogan, “Fight to win.” A few cadets later, someone jumped straight from 26 to 28.

“26 to 28?” one cadre leader said.

“They missed a count,” another said. “Start over.”

This time, Bravo flight didn't miss a number. And when they reached 18, all 30-some members hollered a full-throated “Fight to win!” Satisfied — for now — the cadre allowed them to get up and head to the mess hall for breakfast.

“Bravo flight, that took way too freakin' long,” one cadre said. “It better not take this long next time.”

It was a tough start to these Barbarians' day. It was about to get a lot tougher.

The challenges accelerate

The first phase of basic cadet training began June 26, when the basics arrived at the academy and started learning the simplest parts of military life, such as how to properly march, salute, wear their uniforms, interact with officers and enlisted personnel. They were assigned to one of eight squadrons — Aggressors, Barbarians, Cobras, Demons, Executioners, Flying Tigers, Guts and Hellcats — and then to one of five flights within each squadron, Alpha through Echo.

The blue-bereted cadre leaders also drilled knowledge into the basics' heads, over and over — inspirational quotes from everyone from Robert E. Lee to Muhammad Ali, facts about different aircraft, Air Force history, the names of every basic in their squadron and cadet leaders, and even poems such as “Invictus.”

Parts of the academy's basic training resemble enlisted airmen's basic at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in Texas. Both have strenuous PT, obstacle courses, weapons training, and an emphasis on military discipline.

But some of the 61 incoming freshmen who were prior enlisted said the academy's basic has a greater emphasis on memorization, to train their minds to remember large amounts of information, developing critical thinking skills, and both how to lead others, and take their orders.

"When you're enlisted, you're taught to follow, and do what you're supposed to do," said 21-year-old basic Andy Millan, who was an enlisted boom operator before coming to the academy. "As a cadet, they teach you how to follow and lead at the same time. To be a great leader, you have to be a good follower."

"The enlisted corps is very good about taking a task and getting it done," said 22-year-old basic Sam Taylor of Executioners Bravo flight. "Officers are more tasked with communicating the vision."

Taylor said that while he may not be able to keep up with some of the basics who are four years younger than he, he hoped his experience would be able to help his fellow basics keep their cool under pressure.

"Some of these younger men and women can really kick my butt on the PT field, but I guess I have more patience with some things," Taylor said. "I don't get frustrated very easily. I think they look at that and say, 'Taylor's not upset, maybe things are OK.'"

After about three weeks, basics got their traditional first — and only — day off on July 19, known as Doolie Day Out. The basics were sent to spend the night with families in the Colorado Springs area and recharge. Basics typically caught up on sleep, watched movies or relaxed in other ways, said Cadet 1st Class Chris Dylewski, the cadet wing command chief, but they all knew it would be their last chance to relax before Second Beast began.

Second Beast is 11 arduous days of field training that began the morning of July 21, when the basics and the training cadre assembled on the academy's Terrazzo pavilion. The academy marching band struck up a tune, the cadets passed by and saluted Superintendent Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson and Commandant of Cadets Brig. Gen. Stephen Williams, and began marching 4 miles along closed roads to their new home — the roughly 3,300-acre Jacks Valley.

As the drummers beat their snares, the cadet leaders called cadence to keep the basics in step, and the jody calls began to fill the air: "You can't ride in my little red wagon/the wheel's all broken and the axle's draggin'."

The basics, carrying rubber rifles and wearing their class' red ball cap, mostly stayed in line at first. After about a half-hour, the training cadre ordered basics to sling their rifles over their right shoulders. They were supposed to keep their left hands cupped, but one basic from Demons squadron was later spotted letting his hand hang down. "CUP HANDS, BASIC!" his cadre leader hollered, almost in his ear.

The bills of the red caps started to drift around.

"Stop looking around," one squadron leader said.

"Keep your heads up," said another. "Be proud. Stay together as a unit."

As the basics marched past a B-52 Stratofortress on display, family members waved signs and cheered them on. The basics turned left and entered Jacks Valley.

After an opening ceremony with Johnson, the squadrons headed to a clearing ringed by towering Ponderosa pine trees, where they found their first challenge: setting up the tent city where they would sleep for almost two weeks, as the upperclassmen stepped back and let them figure it out.

It didn't go well at first.

It took more than one try to set up the tents, sorting the short poles from medium poles proved more challenging and time-consuming than expected. Leaders began to emerge as the teams worked together under pressure.

"It's an exercise in patience," said Cadet 1st Class Julian Rojas, the director of operations for Barbarians squadron. "It can even take the whole day. First, they have to figure out how to work as a team. And then they won't set it up right the first time, so we'll go in for corrections."

First command

The basics weren't the only ones learning in Jacks Valley. The upperclassmen who made up the training cadre also got some of their first experiences commanding other airmen there, so when they become second lieutenants, they will have known what it's like commanding others.

Full-fledged officers could be seen from time to time, but mostly hung back and let the cadre run the show. When asked what he planned to do for the day on July 23, BCT deputy commander Lt. Col. Sloan Hollis said, "Hopefully nothing."

"We focus on the cadre — it's their training" as well, Hollis said. "If their training goes good, it works out for the basics. It's four years of a leadership laboratory."

Prospect of failure

The rest of the first afternoon was spent squaring the tent city away — getting their cots, lanterns and foot lockers from the warehouse, setting up the tents, digging trenches with pickaxes to keep rainwater from flooding the tents, and lining the hallways with sandbags.

Basics also decorated their areas as best they could. Some made squadron flags out of empty sandbags, markers and large tree limbs. Executioners squadron made a skull-and-crossbones emblem in the dirt out of small rocks. One Flying Tiger basic drew an intricate tiger in a beret with a marker on a flat stone outside her tent.

As the temperatures reached well into the 90s, cadre leaders PTed their flights. Basics kicked up clouds of dust as they ran. Within a few days, inhaling the valley's dust would leave many of them with the so-called "Jacks hack" — a hacking, rasping cough that is a signature of Second Beast.

Cadre leaders quizzed individual basics or entire flights, ordering them to recite cadre leaders' names, or quotes. Those who couldn't answer had to do more PT. A group of female basics made the mistake of referring to a female cadre leader as "sir," and were made to do flutter kicks on their backs while counting off and chanting "MA'AM, YOU'RE A MA'AM, NOT A SIR, MA'AM, 59, MA'AM."

And the basics nervously anticipated the infamous assault course. They passed rumors around about what it would be like, but aside from expecting something like what they'd seen in the movies, most weren't sure exactly what was in store.

"We dread it," said Ben Anderson, an 18-year-old Hellcats Delta basic from Atlanta, who is following his colonel father into the Air Force and hopes to become a combat rescue officer. "That's been on my mind ever

since Beast Two started. I wanted to get as physically prepared for that as I can. I know ... it's going to be the hardest thing I can imagine. It'll be an experience to remember."

Dalton Crozier, an 18-year-old Flying Tigers Bravo basic from Hernando, Mississippi, who wants to become a pilot, described grueling PT — or, figuratively, "getting beat" — during the first phase of basic training. But he noted with pride that no one from Bravo flight quit, and said he thought all the PT had left him as prepared as possible for the assault course.

"There's some times when you get to a point where your body just literally goes numb," Crozier said. "The repetitions can just keep coming. But Bravo flight came together as a team. Not knowing what's coming, you can never be truly prepared. But I believe we're all prepared, as much as we can be for what's fixing to happen."

While the assault course was indeed dreaded, it is a crucial tool to teach basics one of the most important lessons of basic training: how to fail, and pick themselves back up again.

That's vital because teenagers who choose to come to the Air Force Academy instead of a traditional college are often very driven young people who may not have faced that challenge before, Peeler said.

Peeler said he had to learn that humility as a basic himself.

"Everybody fails, and a lot of these basic cadets come from communities where they've never failed, and never learned what it's like to reach your bottom, but still realize that there's growth to be had," Peeler said. "I was top of my [high school] class [in York, Pennsylvania], class president, everything I did seemed to be right, and I was kind of cocky. I remember getting smoked. There was a point [where I asked], is it worth it? But learning that you can trust people, that trust factor was huge when I hit bottom, knowing my flight and classmates helped pick me up."

Christopher Delgado, a 20-year-old prior enlisted basic from Austin, Texas, agreed that facing the prospect of failure, and learning one can get through it, is crucial.

"Basic training is designed for you to lose," said Delgado, of Barbarians Charlie flight. "They give you so many things that it's near impossible to complete it all. Most of the people who come to the academy [are] used to succeeding in whatever they do — sports, academics — and so it pushes everyone out of their comfort zone, really forces them to accept defeat in certain areas. Accept the fact that you can't always be perfect at everything you do. But it doesn't really allow you to fully accept it, because they still expect the best out of you."

And no course at Jacks Valley rubs failure in the face of basics like the assault course.

'Ready to kill the enemy'

Nobody ever finishes the assault course — not the first time they try it.

"The reason we don't let them through, is because it needs to be chaos," said Cadet 1st Class Harrison Elliott of Roswell, Georgia, one of the assault course commanders. "This is the most warlike it's going to get at the academy. We're trying to make chaos, so they can stay calm in chaos. When we actually do let them finish it the second time, they've been in this course for six hours now. It makes them earn it."

Barbarians squadron arrived at the assault course at about 7 a.m. July 22, carrying their “rubber ducky” rifles and reciting “Invictus.” “My head is bloody, but unbowed,” they say. “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.”

But before basics even stepped on the assault course, the black-hatted course cadre drilled them for about 40 minutes on rifle maneuvers — parries, butt smashes and strokes, and thrusts — and made them do grenades, dropping to the ground and springing back up, over and over again. When basics didn’t jump high enough after a grenade, or hold their knees at a proper 90-degree angle while aiming, or lost control of their rifles, displeased A-course cadre leaders grabbed their rifles and flung them across the field, forcing the basics to low-crawl 25 yards or so through the grass to get it back.

“Basic in the back, resting your elbows on your knees — I see you,” a cadre leader said.

“Are you smiling?” another shouted.

One cadre leader ordered a basic to fake-fire his rubber rifle as if he was in combat — and was not happy with the sound the basic made. “What do you think this is, ‘Star Wars?’ Pew pew? No! Bang bang!”

“You, holding your rifle to the side, like you’re going to shoot it like a gangster — low crawl,” a cadre leader says through a bullhorn to a basic in the back.

By the time the warm-up was done, the basics were drenched in sweat, several had dirt and grass smeared on their face from low crawling, and they were breathing hard.

“You all look absolutely pathetic,” a cadre leader says. “The course has yet to begin. It is three hours. That’s a long time to exercise. You should be ready to kill the enemy. You look absolutely pathetic.”

The assault course began all of a sudden, with loud booms from cannons and smoke grenades spewing acrid pink smoke through the air. But before the basics could even cross the starting line, beneath a sign that read “Only the strong survive,” instructors blew whistles and ordered them to do grenade after grenade, dozens of them, hundreds by the time the morning would be over.

The rubber rifles felt heavier and heavier each time they went down and up, but finally, the cadre allowed them to move on to the next obstacle — a low crawl through the dirt under barbed wire. Next was a hurdle — basics had to jump on a tall log, land with both feet, and jump off. Then, the cadre made them do high knee steps in place while holding their rifle over their heads, and more grenades.

They moved on to practice their rifle parries and butt strokes, and then crawled through tunnels — but only after they did high knees to the cadre’s satisfaction. By that point, many basics’ ABUs were caked in mud.

Then, more hurdles and rifle maneuvers as the basics stabbed dummies with the barrel of their rifles, gouging out bits of foam rubber.

“Kill it! Kill it!” a cadre leader shouts.

One group of basics duck-walked up a hill, holding their rifles over their heads — only to be sent back down by a cadre leader once they reached the top. Another group high-crawled under netting, and some snagged their helmets on the net. Sweat gushed from one basic’s forehead as he crawled backwards to untangle his helmet.

Some became overwhelmed quickly. After the first obstacle, one hyperventilating basic was pulled to the side by a cadre leader. His eyes couldn't focus, and a cadre leader calmed him down and brought his breathing back to normal.

Others did better. Cadre leaders picked basics, seemingly at random, and ordered them to do exercises such as pushups. One basic kept going as he passed 200 pushups, then 300 pushups, and finally ended at 400 pushups — a feat that drew rare admiration from the assault course cadre.

Basics then climbed over a wall, and low crawled on their back through loose dirt and sand that went straight down the collar of their ABUs, while trying to keep their rifles away from cadre members who were looking to snatch them.

"You're disgusting," a cadre said as a basic slid under barbed wire. "Absolutely disgusting. How did you get this far?"

After a high crawl through mud, another wall, and another low crawl through barbed wire, the sixteenth and final obstacle came in sight: A wall below a sign that read, past-tense, "Only the strong survived."

But nobody climbed the final wall that day. Basics who made it that far encountered cadre members who ordered them to do even more grenades, and then sent them back to the beginning of the course, to do the obstacles again and again.

Working together

Elliott said he was pleased with the basics' performance that day, overall. Some did well, others didn't. The ones who didn't do well might need some more help from their flight cadre, he said.

Usually, Elliott said, it's a mental barrier basics must overcome.

"Your body can go farther than you think you can," Elliott said. "Anyone can make it three hours of this. It's all mental."

Kait Barry, an 18-year-old basic from Naugatuck, Connecticut, in Barbarians Charlie flight, said she found a low-crawl up the hill to be the toughest part.

"Your body is already fatigued from the whole start of it, and then you have to give everything to keep your face on the ground, your rifle secure, use your whole body to go up" the hill, she said. "Using all your muscles when you're already drained, to keep going and going, knowing that there's something else to do after."

Delgado said the course pushed him farther than he thought he could go.

"Doing it with the team helps you keep going that extra distance," he said. "I know there were lots of points I wanted to stop, but everyone around me was still going, so I had to make sure I kept pushing myself, holding myself to the same standard as everyone else."

And after surviving the assault course, the basics said they felt a feeling of accomplishment.

"If we can push ourselves through this, what else can they really throw at us?" said Manuel Figueroa, a 20-year-old prior enlisted basic from Chicago, also in Barbarians Charlie flight. "As long as we stay working together, stay concentrated, stay motivated, there's nothing that we can't do."

Give up? 'No, sir'

After the assault course, Barbarians squadron took it easy for the rest of the day and drilled the 15-count rifle manual. That afternoon, Aggressors squadron ran a confidence course of lighter, team-building obstacles. Flying Tigers went through chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training, but Crozier was disappointed to hear they wouldn't get tear gassed this year. "Budget cuts," he said. "No fun."

Other squadrons received field medical training, firearms training, ethics courses, or ran a leadership reaction course that sought to teach problem-solving skills.

The morning of July 23, Executioners squadron assembled to run the obstacle course. The O-course cadre's tone at first could hardly have been more different than the A-course. An O-course cadre leader told deadpan jokes as the basics stretched and warmed up, and even led the basics in the "Cupid Shuffle" line dance.

Then the basics were off, climbing up a rope ladder and a reverse climb obstacle, weaving under one log and over another, rope-swinging onto a crossbar and then across a pond. Some unlucky basics fell in the pond, and then coated their soaked ABUs in sand as they low-crawled through the next obstacle. The cadre laughed, and said one looked like a sugar cookie. The basics cheered each other on and applauded when one made it to the top of a difficult obstacle.

After familiarizing themselves with the obstacle course, the basics ran through it a second time. This time, it was closer to the assault course's atmosphere. The cadre yelled for basics to do pushups and get down in front-leaning rests, and pushed them to finish the obstacles and move on faster.

On the last obstacle, which required basics to hang from a rope strung over a pond and work their way to the other side, a cadre leader in mirrored sunglasses became irritated at one basic's slow pace.

"Just give up," the cadre leader told her. "Just drop in."

"No, sir," she said in a strained voice, as she closed the last few feet.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20140811/NEWS/308110015/For-prior-enlisted-s-back-basic-training>

For Prior enlisted, it's back to basic training:

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. — For many airmen, basic training is the most grueling part of joining the Air Force. And some might consider it nuts for anyone to go through basic not just once, but three times.

But that's exactly what 53 enlisted airmen enrolled in the Air Force Academy's preparatory school are in the process of doing. Those prior-enlisted "preppies" make up 22 percent of the academy's 243 cadet candidates who hope to join the class of 2019 next year.

"When I told my commander I got accepted into the academy, he said, 'Congratulations, you're the craziest person I know for wanting to do three basic trainings,' " said 21-year-old Jake Saucedo of Smyrna, Tennessee, who was a security forces senior airman at Moody Air Force Base's 820th Base Defense Group in Georgia before coming to the prep school. " 'Hopefully they give you oak leaf clusters on your basic training ribbon.' "

Saucedo and two other prep school prior enlisteds said in a July 24 interview that basic training at the prep school is more physical and intense than the basic they went through when they enlisted.

“I’ve done more abdominal workouts here in the last week and a half than I’ve done in the last year,” said 21-year-old Jared Flowers of Monterey, California, who was a senior airman and a geospatial imagery analyst at Hickam Air Force Base’s 8th Intelligence Squadron in Hawaii.

Saucedo said the training seeks to hone minds as well as bodies.

“They care about their future leaders being in a lot better shape,” Saucedo said. “And they also make you think a lot more in this one, as to where the enlisted basic training was more taking orders — this is the exact specific way, down to the minute detail, it better get done. [But] here, they’re like, amongst yourselves figure out what needs to happen and decide.”

Flowers said by giving cadet candidates chances to solve problems on their own, they practice thinking creatively, which will be important when they take command.

“They need you to step up and lead, to figure it out amongst yourselves,” Flowers said. “They want to grow the future leaders of the Air Force, so they want us to lead and figure out how to do things for ourselves, how to get our dorms clean, from the smallest things to the biggest things.”

Most of the prep school cadet candidates do not have military experience. Some are recruited athletes, and others are “diversity students” who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as poor school districts, said Col. Jerry Szybist, prep school commander. Those disadvantaged students have “grit” and could excel, Szybist said, and just need the opportunity to beef up their academics during their 10 months at the prep school before becoming full-fledged cadets.

The prep school begins with three weeks of basic military training, where cadet candidates learn discipline, values and the foundations of military life, and gain self-confidence. But the prep school also tries to “pull them together,” he said. Some may not have worked side-by-side with a black person or a woman, he said, and the prep school has to get them used to dealing with people from different walks of life.

The prep school tests students — mainly in English, mathematics and science, particularly chemistry — to see where they need help.

“We are building leaders for our nation,” Szybist said. “We want those leaders to pull from a variety of locations, a variety of demographics, to really represent our country ... so we don’t have a population of leaders who are only from one background.”

Those who attend the prep school have a good chance of becoming full-fledged cadets. About 75 percent of last year’s 236 cadet candidates, or 177, were offered appointments to the academy, and all but four accepted and joined the class of 2018. But graduating from the prep school doesn’t guarantee an appointment. Last year, 12 of the 189 graduates did not receive appointments.

Drawing on enlisted experience

Flowers said he always wanted to be in the military, but after enlisting, realized that being an officer would provide more opportunities to lead. He hopes to earn a degree in geospatial sciences and become an intelligence officer, providing information to troops downrange.

Saucedo said a mentor encouraged him to come to the academy and use his prior enlisted experience to make the Air Force better. He hopes to become a combat search and rescue Pave Hawk pilot.

Other prior enlisted basics, who already made it into the Class of 2018 and were in the second phase of their basic cadet training, had different motivations.

“Being enlisted, I saw what a bad officer could do to a squadron as a whole,” said 20-year-old Manuel Figueroa, who was an airman first class before he came directly to the academy as a Class of 2018 basic, bypassing the prep school. “I wanted to come here and be a good officer and go back. My goal is to be a maintenance officer, and go back and take care of the maintenance world I left behind.”

When asked how an officer’s mistakes can hurt the enlisted under his command, Figueroa said his squad was once ordered to work 12-hour shifts, including weekends, for a month. The second lieutenant in charge of that shop decided that was too much, he said, and without getting permission from his superiors, took the squad off that schedule — even though the punishing hours were only going to last a few more days. But when a senior officer found out, Figueroa said, he ordered the squad to work another month-and-a-half of 12-hour shifts and on weekends.

That second lieutenant’s heart may have been in the right place, but because he didn’t think through the consequences of his decision, his airmen suffered, Figueroa said.

Andy Millan, a 21-year-old prior enlisted basic in the Class of 2018, who was a boom operator, came to the prep school in July 2013.

“I loved the camaraderie, I loved always trying to make a difference,” he said. “Every day was something new. Going around the world, that was a great time. You can learn a lot from meeting different people.”

But Millan said one of his biggest challenges was learning to allow the prep school to humble him.

“A lot of priors come into BCT and think they’re better than everyone else,” Millan said. “They’ve done this two times or three times, and they’re just headstrong about all their knowledge, and they want to do everything for everyone. But you have to embrace it, because it’s a whole different experience. Instead of being enlisted, it teaches you to be an officer.”

Millan said one time he learned to humble himself was when the training cadre — who were either his age or younger — told him he was doing something the wrong way. “Even though I knew how to do something, I’d have to do it their way to get through, [not] just sticking to my way, kind of lone- dogging it,” he said. “You have to bring up your own team to succeed.”

The prior enlisted say they mentor the younger cadet candidates who don’t have military experience

“They didn’t know what was going on,” Flowers said. “I was happy to help them, because we have to get through this together. But we had to teach them how to make their beds, clean things.”

The prior enlisted help the younger cadet candidates get through homesickness and unease in a new environment, because they faced those feelings just a few years ago. But they sometimes have to check themselves.

“When [instructors] say stand at a position of attention, and I see a person move, I want to scream at them, but I can’t, because I’m not in that position of power,” said Paul Matthews, a 20-year-old prep school student

from Newcomerstown, Ohio, who was an airman first class at Offutt Air Force Base's 55th Aircraft Maintenance Group in Nebraska.

And the cadet candidates laugh that going through basic training over and over again will leave them with finely honed skills.

"I'm going to have the nicest-made beds in all of the land," Saucedo said.

Class of '15 preps for career field choices

by Ray Bowden

U.S. Air Force Academy Public Affairs

8/8/2014 - **U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo.** -- Academy cadets have until Aug. 15 to submit their rated and non-rated Air Force Specialty Code preferences, and the Board Order of Merit Board is scheduled to meet Sept. 8-11, an Academy Manpower and Personnel Office official said.

Other significant dates for cadets are: Aug. 22, the deadline for submission of the U.S. Air Force Academy Form 94s, the Cadet Evaluation for the Board Order of Merit Board; Sept. 12 - 17, the tentative date rated AFSC results are scheduled to be released to cadets; Sept. 18 - 22, when cadets may opt-out of their selected rated AFSC; and Sept. 30, when the Air Force Personnel Center will conduct the non-rated AFSC match for Academy and ROTC cadets.

"The key message for the Class of 2015 is that this is their decision with respect to their careers," said Laurie Carroll, the Academy's Manpower and Personnel director. "They need to seriously consider their rated and non-rated career field choices as it definitely impacts their future career. We've given them the tools and information to make this decision and we stand ready to assist them and answer questions as they make their way through this process. "

In a March interview with Academy Public Affairs staff writer Don Branum, Carroll said the Academy had adjusted its rated classification process. These changes are scheduled to be initiated this fall to meet staffing targets for combat systems officers, air battle managers and remotely piloted aircraft pilots, she said.

Under this process, a cadet who volunteers to be considered for a pilot position will also be considered for three other rated positions based on his or her preference and a Rated Order of Merit, Carroll said in the March interview.

"Under the new rated selection process, cadets have to select their rated AFSCs by Aug. 15 and indicate their preferences for all four rated AFSCs by signing a memorandum of understanding," Carroll said.

The Academy Manpower and Personnel Office will make the rated AFSC matches based on medical qualifications, Air Force Officer Qualifying Test scores, Pilot Candidate Selection Method scores, cadet preferences and BOM scores. The ultimate objective is to fill critical Air Force mission needs, Carroll said.

Academy officials have designed a prototype model to be a single source of information for rated AFSC distribution, and for quickly displaying the results by some of the key demographic factors frequently requested by leadership, Carroll said.

Capt. Clinton Ricks, the Academy's chief of cadet personnel, worked with Dr. Steven Hadfield from the Computer Science Department here to develop the model. The model combines data from four separate sources, reducing redundancy and helping minimize the chances of human error from manually entering information into

spreadsheets, the previous method.

"We're automating it as much as possible to reduce potential mistakes, and we'll analyze the results respective to all the qualification factors," Carroll said. "The goal is to meet Air Force mission needs, which we have not met before."

Manpower and Personnel officials hold regular cadet classification briefings here to update and inform cadets on the process. The last briefing, attended by more than 860 seniors, took place Aug. 5.

During the briefing, Ricks encouraged cadets to make sure their career information was updated, discussed available career fields and discussed options available to cadets should they not be assigned to the specialty code of their choice, he said.

Carroll said the non-rated AFSC assignment process remains unchanged from the last several years.

"In late September, we forward those to AFPC where the combined USAFA and ROTC cadet non-rated AFSC match is conducted," she said.

Ricks will continue to spread the word about the cadet AFSC selection process through briefings for the Class of '17, the 306th Flying Training Group and an upcoming dean of faculty meeting for faculty members, Carroll said.

For more information, call the cadet personnel section at 333-1062.

CCLD staff brings core values to the masses

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418273>

For the past six months, the Center for Character and Leadership Development's strategic outreach team here has traveled throughout the country to expand the conversation on character development.

The team of six visited 15 organizations, briefing active duty service members and Reservists, corporations, federal agencies, community groups, and the academic community, on curriculum designed to put the Air Force core values into practice through self-discovery and sessions on becoming a leader of character.

"The goal of our strategic outreach initiatives is to provide powerful, pertinent and theoretically grounded curriculum that inspires and equips individuals, teams, and organizations to realize sustained character and leadership development," said Col. Joseph Sanders, CCLD director and Academy permanent professor. "While the target audience has historically been cadets, a renewed emphasis on developing all relevant stakeholders has expanded the focus to other internal and external groups that serve as force multipliers for character and leadership development."

Sessions include a personal assessment of the audience, insight on character and leadership development, and how individuals can use this knowledge in a personal and professional context.

"They offer each participant the opportunity to clarify and own their commitment and take the first step toward those commitments in our workshops," Sanders said.

A leader of character lives honorably by consistently practicing the virtues embodied in the core values, lifting others to their best possible selves, and elevating performance toward a common and noble purpose, he said.

"Our goal is to be the Air Force's Academy and elevate conversation about leadership development wherever it fits," Sanders said.

Lt. Col. Kevin Basik, the CCLD's assistant director of cadet development, said the team collects information from participants beforehand to discuss topics relevant to them.

"There is a lot of power in, 'here's what you said so let's talk about this,'" he said. "That's one way we're trying to make the sessions real and applicable."

Sanders and Basik presented curriculum at the Global Strike Commanders' Conference at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., in April and continue to receive presentation requests across the United States.

This month, the team was selected as the Cadet Wing Team of the Quarter for all recent outreach events.

"We are honored and humbled our efforts were recognized among these teams of outstanding service members," Basik said. "We never show up to other bases and organizations with the assumption that we at the Academy have it all figured out. We have our own challenges that remind us that character and leadership development is a never ending pursuit."

Potential and incoming basketball recruits here receive sessions on character development and leadership, said women's basketball assistant coach Lori Morris

Morris said the sessions are inspiring and give Academy recruits and their parents a deeper understanding of the Academy's mission and goals.

"It's about being the person you want to be, strive to be, and having your actions match up," she said. "It's a great reminder during the decision-making process."

The sessions hit home with people, Morris said.

"They include all aspects of life such as interpersonal relationships, the workforce, being the best possible leader and staying as true to your belief system and moral compass as possible," she said. "It is also an opportunity to remind one another that it's more important to do the right thing than the expedient thing."

Usafa.af.mil

From trash to treasure: Converting Academy waste into renewable energy

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418271>

New research here reveals Academy trash might be a treasure.

Last August, the Department of Defense Environmental Security Technology Certification Program funded CDM Smith, a national engineering and construction firm, to test how the Academy can reduce energy use and cost at its wastewater treatment plant, and convert food waste from its dining hall into energy.

Academy professors and engineers toured the Mitchell Hall kitchen and the wastewater treatment plant here Tuesday to learn more about the processes and results of the year-long project.

"About 2-3 percent of the nation's energy goes to treating wastewater and water," said Pat Evans, CDM Smith vice president. "Most of the energy that's used is for pumping the water and aerating it. We're trying to get wastewater treatment plants to become energy neutral or energy producers instead of energy consumers. One step toward that goal is capturing energy from food waste through anaerobic digestion."

According to Glen Loyche, Mitchell Hall facility manager, two- to- three semi-trucks haul food to the Academy every day to feed 4,000 cadets.

"Each trailer carries 20-40 pallets of food," he said.

Leftover food at the dining hall is run through large grinders, turned into pulp and transferred into dump trucks.

"Waste management here picks up four and a half tons of pulp product here every week," Loyche said.

CDM Smith collects food waste from Mitchell Hall three days a week and converts it into methane and carbon dioxide.

"We're testing on a very small, pilot scale," Evans said. "We transfer the food waste into anaerobic digesters, about 350 gallons in size that hold about 250 gallons of sludge and food waste. We convert the waste into methane for beneficial uses such as heating boilers, generating electricity and vehicle fuel once it's purified."

Greenhouse gases emitted from food waste takes a toll on the environment, Evans said. "Some landfills capture the methane released but a lot don't," Evans said. "Methane is a really potent greenhouse gas, much more potent than carbon dioxide. The environmental impact is that it takes up space, emits greenhouse gases and water can go through the waste and generate leaching, which can contaminate ground water."

CDM Smith removes hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide and water when converting the waste into methane.

"We purify it," Evans said. "Hydrogen sulfide, or rotten egg gas, is very toxic and can result in corrosion of a lot of equipment. At the end of the process we have pure methane, or natural gas, that can be compressed into vehicle fuel."

Overall, the project has been successful, Evans said.

"We found you get a lot more gas and energy out of fat and protein than you do out of carbohydrates," he said. "We can't control the amount of carbs, fat and protein cadets eat or waste, but now we have a better understanding of how much gas we can get for a given food waste."

One- to- two percent of the solid waste generated in the U.S. is food waste, Evans said.

"The Academy's food waste is an energy-rich resource that in going to landfills ends up having an environmental impact," he said. "By converting food waste to methane through anaerobic digestion, we can decrease the impact to the environment, recover energy and help the Defense Department's reach its net zero goals."

Russell Hume, a mechanical engineer with the Academy's Directorate of Installations, said converting waste to make energy is a phenomenal step in the right direction for the Academy and world.

"I think it has been a great demonstration of the art of the possible," he said. "I would like to see this technology further developed and perfected to the point that it becomes widely available to all."

The project ends Aug. 1.

Usafa.af.mil

'Prior - E' takes on USAFA Prep School challenges

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418266>

The U.S. Air Force Academy's Preparatory School inprocessed 243 cadet candidates this week, but this wasn't the first taste of military life for one 20-year-old woman.

"Before arriving at the Prep School I was stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., as a broadcast journalist," said basic cadet candidate Veronique Henry. "I dealt with video, alert photography and wrote news stories. Since I was at a space base, I captured a lot of video for launches."

Henry, along with 52 other prior-enlisted Airmen, arrived at the Prep School last week to inprocess separate from the direct-entry cadet candidates. Part of their training involved a three-part briefing with Center for Character and Leadership Development representatives designed to help them better understand the transition from an enlisted Airmen to a future officer, according to the Academy Preparatory School Husky Report.

"As a prior-enlisted Airman, I hope to bring perspective to the table," Henry said. "I understand how the enlisted force and force structure works and its importance and now I will also see the officer side. Experiencing and being part of both with allow me to share how the two differ, how they are similar, and also how the two work and fit together."

Although she gave up her airman first class stripes this week, Henry realized the opportunities offered at the Academy would get her closer to her goals.

"I got into bodybuilding early last year and competed for the first time in March," she said. "I qualified to compete to go (professional), but I passed it up to come here instead. The same way I saw bodybuilding as a challenge is the same way I saw the Academy as a challenge to better myself. The Air Force is giving me a free education and plenty of awesome opportunities. The least I can give in return is my all."

Henry has her eyes set on earning her place as an officer, but said she has plenty left to achieve on her Air Force journey.

"I know it sounds like the Air Force thing to say, but I genuinely bleed blue," she said. "Whether it is in academics or a leadership position, I want to give it all I have. I want to make a point of showing people the kind of leader I am while also showing I know how to follow as well."

Basic cadet candidates spend 10 months at the Prep School receiving academic and military training with the hopes of earning an appointment to the Academy.

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Technology transfer: it's the law

This summer, the Academy's Research Office is developing and implementing a formal technology transfer program to allow industry partners better access to cadet and faculty research technologies and capabilities.

As phase one of this paradigm shift unfolds, we'd like to provide you a sneak peak at our blueprints. Keep in mind, the ultimate goal is to enhance the cadet experience by fostering opportunities and resources contributing to their leadership development.

The crux of the T2 mission hinges on the belief it manifests benefits to the national economy and society as a whole. For these reasons, T2 is now part of federal law.

Most recently, a presidential memorandum, "Accelerating Technology Transfer and Commercialization of Federal Research," required federal laboratories to shift technology from labs to the commercial sector.

Congress weighed-in as well, in a variety of Defense Department policy directives and federal legal requirements.

As a federal research laboratory, the Academy has a statutory requirement to engage in T2 to commercialize research products and technology. Going forward, the Academy's T2 program embraces this philosophy and engages all authorities we have to work with: licenses, partner intermediaries, commercial testing and collaboration with other educational institutions. Our intention is to connect with you -- the researcher, the innovator, the entrepreneur.

An entrepreneurial mindset is a world view anyone can aspire to and entrepreneurship is necessary to promulgate technology into the private sector.

Technology transfer and entrepreneurship go hand-in-hand. In the early 1980s, Congress recognized encouraging entrepreneurs could assist those who wanted to solve problems, but who might not have access to the necessary resources to make their vision a reality.

Federal T2 legislation opened the doors of federal and national laboratories so business-minded people can seize the technology available there and create new products, new businesses and new jobs.

The concept of T2 left Congress with great fanfare and began buzzing around communities. Small business owners, investors and inventors teemed with joy when they heard the news, at least until they realized the doors were not actually open wide, but federal lab directors had only been told to crack the seal.

Fast-forward 28 years and federal laboratory directors across the nation embrace T2 and fully execute their role to ensure T2 is part of doing business in a federal laboratory.

They've created key personnel positions, established in Office of Research and Technology, to prepare application assessments for selected research and development projects which might have potential commercial applications.

In 2010, Congress recognized the importance of generating new ideas, innovations and concepts by passing the America Invents Act. Now, T2 has matured from the concept of tossing widgets over the fence to that of creating federated partnerships focused on innovation and economic development.

Our role in Air Force T2 is unique since most of our inventions and intellectual property are created by cadets. Taking advantage of the new "First-to-File" rule under the America Invents Act, cadets and faculty alike are completing invention disclosures. Businesses can license some of our technologies immediately; under Air Force policy, this means the licensee will pay royalties to the inventor and the laboratory for use of the technology. Inventors get the first \$2,000 and up to \$150,000 per year.

Rewarding inventors is the key driver in promulgating an innovative, entrepreneurial culture. Focused laboratories build infrastructure, process and partners moving capabilities to industry for commercialization; those without the necessary partnerships tend to forget T2 is the law.

At the Academy, we're on track for a very successful couple of years, thanks to our recently granted authority to partner with an intermediary. Our reach will stretch further and technology can reach the community in real time, as needs arise.

The doors of the Academy's federal lab are wide open. Research centers host tours for hundreds of visitors each year. Many of these face-to-face meetings result in collaborative research efforts. Since 2001, USAFA has

been using these opportunities for T2 under Cooperative Research and Development Agreements signed by the dean of the faculty.

For qualified companies, grants are available to advance research in specific areas of interest to the public and the Air Force. These T2 collaborations with USAFA became a reality in 2001 when our contracting office was granted authority to enter into cooperative agreements.

The entrepreneurial value of cadet capability and inventions are available to the community. Inventive thinking leveraging these assets is what entrepreneurs do. Federal laboratories with resources hold open the door.

usafa.af.mil

Installations director outlines vision for new visitor center

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418802>

The Air Force Academy will move forward next month on the first step toward building a new visitor center just west of Interstate 25, the director of installations said July 21.

Carlos Cruz-Gonzalez said the Air Force's Financial Management Center of Expertise in Denver conducted business case analyses on several alternatives, including sites at Falcon Stadium, on the east side of I-25, using leased space in an unfinished office complex near Interquest Parkway or using the existing visitor center site, before settling on a site just north of the Santa Fe Trail parking lot on the west side of I-25, just outside the North Gate.

"It gives us an opportunity to simplify our security situation," he said. "If, heaven forbid, we have another incident like Sept. 11, 2001, and we have to close access to the installation, people can still access the visitor center."

The Academy will use a public-private partnership to build the new facility, Cruz-Gonzalez said. The Academy uses a public-private partnership for base housing, as do several other Air Force bases.

"It's an attractive location," he said. "If private parties want to collaborate with us and can build a facility for what the land is worth, we see it as an opportunity to leverage a public-private partnership."

Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson asked the Installations Directorate, or A7, staff to consider intangible factors such as campus security, accessibility to the visitor center and the capability to expand. Only the I-25 site met these requirements, as Falcon Stadium lies within the Academy's security cordon.

Another benefit to the site is that the Cadet Area and Cadet Chapel -- and soon the Center for Character and Leadership Development -- are all visible from I-25. What's more, locating the visitor center near I-25 would save people from making the three-mile drive to the center's current location.

The construction process will begin with an environmental impact assessment scheduled to take about six months, Cruz-Gonzalez said. If that goes favorably, A7 will work with the Air Force Civil Engineer Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, to draft a request for proposal.

"We're taking under-used assets, in this case acreage, and making it available at fair-market value for a private agency to develop and provide the Air Force Academy a service in kind," he said. "In this case, the service in kind would be a visitor center. The Civil Engineer Center will issue a request for proposal, and we'll see what comes up -- who's interested and what proposals they'll put on the table."

"The Air Force's Academy, producing lieutenants for our Air Force and leaders for our Nation."

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"The Air Force's Academy, producing lieutenants for our Air Force and leaders for our Nation."

Based on the RFP's complexity, that part of the process could take anywhere from six months to two years, Cruz-Gonzalez said. The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics would award the contract. Actual construction would take at least two years, meaning the Academy could finish construction by 2020.

The A7 staff said they'll consider bids with sensitivity to what the institution represents, both architecturally and in terms of the Academy's brand, Cruz-Gonzalez said.

"We're very proud of the architectural heritage here, and we would expect the facility to reflect that," he said. "We want people, when they visit the Air Force Academy visitor center, to see the connection to the Air Force and to the Academy."

The new visitor center could improve the visitor experience by listing everything that's available to people before they set foot on the campus, Cruz-Gonzalez said.

"We have the chapel and the CCLD, but we also have the Falcon Athletic Center; we have activities at the Cadet Field House; we have several overlooks where people can get a great view of the Cadet Area, and if they visit at the right time of day, they can see some of the wildlife here. We have the Association of Graduates' Heritage Trail. The visitor center then becomes the foundation of a program to better manage the visitor experience."

The Academy's Public Affairs Directorate would run the facility, as it does now, with space set aside for a gift shop and a food operation. A new visitor center would also include a 250-seat theater and large conference room.

As for the current visitor center, David Cannon, the Academy's director of communication, said the current VC could be used as a museum and admissions activities.

"We are a part of the Pikes Peak region," Cannon said. "We are a part of that destination and want to see our visitors to the Air Force's Academy back to pre-9/11 levels. Having the Visitor Center near the north gate and I-25 can help us do that. We want to be in the discussion when people think about visiting the area."

Air Force Print News Today

10th CS Airman to run for good cause

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123419011>

A network administrator with the 10th Communications Squadron at the Academy will compete in the 2014 Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, Sept. 20 to raise money for the Air Force Enlisted Village.

Airman 1st Class Dylan MacDermot is the only Academy representative scheduled to run in the marathon as a member of the 99-person Team Air Force Enlisted Village.

The marathon is an annual event involving more than 15,000 runners and 2,300 volunteers.

Along with the marathon, the base hosts a half marathon, a 10K and a 5K on the same day.

MacDermot is excited to be able to represent not only USAFA, but the Air Force Enlisted Village, a charitable organization dedicated to providing free housing to widows of retired Airmen.

Proceeds from Team AFEV's fundraising go toward expanding and updating housing facilities for widows of retired Air Force personnel.

"I think it's an honor for me to be able to do this, to be able to represent this organization," MacDermot said. "I didn't actually think I'd be able to do something like this, so I just want to prove to myself that I can."

MacDermot began training even more seriously since being nominated to run for Team AFEV.

"I'm probably running 4-5 times a week, varying from doing distance runs to doing sprints, and trying to go somewhere that's a bit hilly so I can condition properly," he said. "I have been running for probably seven years."

MacDermot cites his father, a half marathon runner, as his inspiration to start running seriously.

"I thought it sounded like a lot of fun to be able to run for such a long distance and not have to stop. So ever since that point, I started setting my sights for being a better distance runner."

Senior Master Sgt. Ernie Reyes, 10th CS superintendent mentored MacDermot throughout this process, in addition to having initially nominated him.

"I know that he's very hardworking and dedicated," said Reyes, who has joined MacDermot for several runs. "And he's definitely fit for it. He's one of the communications squadron's brightest young Airmen, so we wanted to showcase that as well - not just across USAFA, but to the Air Force."

MacDermot has set a personal fundraising goal for the Air Force Enlisted Village of \$2,500, and hopes to raise money on and off base.

Visit www.atenlistedwidows.org/teamafev for more information.

Usafa.af.mil

Developing world connections: Cadets journey to Cambodia results in hard work, new friendships
<http://www.usafa.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418568>

Building latrines in a tropical climate within mere feet of a pig sty might not seem a good tradeoff for summer leave from the Air Force's Academy, but five cadets did just that and more in Cambodia.

Cadets Dylan Juedeman, Winston Sanks, Luke Stensberg, Annie Von Seggern and Hansena Vangen enrolled in the Academy's Cultural Immersion Program to learn how non-governmental organizations, the State Department, the U.S. military and its allies, team to improve public health and human rights, and reduce corruption. The trip was the first of its kind sponsored by the USAFA Class of 1981 Endowment.

The trip was organized and led by Col. Marty France, Academy permanent professor and head of the Astronautics Department. France selected the cadet team after interviews in the fall of 2013 and led preparations for the trip through an independent study course, Foreign Area Studies 499, offered in cooperation with the Political Science Department.

"The cadets read about Cambodia's long and often troubled history, concentrating on the Khmer Rouge Genocide (1975-1979), its aftermath and the current political and developmental state of the nation," he said. "They conducted interviews with Cambodian citizens and discussed goals for the trip over the course of the semester, working with Developing World Connections, a Canadian NGO helping organize service trips to developing world countries."

The team met with U.S. Embassy officials (Peace Corps, defense attaché and the U.S. Agency for International Development) June 23 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to learn how U.S. agencies team with others to help countries modernize and provide better opportunities for their citizens.

The next evening the cadets met Cambodian officers and trainees, enrolled in an English immersion class sponsored by the U.S., the United Kingdom and Australia, at Cambodia's National Defense University for a barbecue.

"Spending time with the Cambodian cadets and officers, I see that many of them are motivated by the same motivations as we have; (they) have similar fears and aspirations and are trying their best just as we are," Sanks said.

The team made time for tourism in Phnom Penh and near Siem Reap, visiting markets, museums, the Royal Palace and other landmarks, including the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, or "S-21," and Choeung Ek - aka "The Killing Fields."

"Standing in the S-21 prison and the Killing Fields was a shocking and terrifying experience," Sanks said. "It's one thing to rationally know that a tragic event has happened somewhere; it's another to stand amongst the cells and the fields where the acts have taken place; and still quite another to see the scratches on the walls, the chains and torture implements on display, and photos of the victims before their deaths - or to see the skulls of five thousand within the Stupa at Choeung Ek and a tooth and a femur bone of a victim sticking out of the ground. The realities of what have happened in this country are very real for me now."

The cadets hiked in a Cambodian national park, visited a wildlife refuge and rescue complex and sampled local cuisine, including fried tarantula, crickets and Red tree ant stir fry.

Then they went to work, leaving Phnom Penh for the coastal town of Kep June 29. During the next two weeks in the nearby village of Odong, they completed four brick and stucco latrines.

The projects and locations were chosen by Equitable Cambodia, a Cambodian NGO, and village leaders to have the most positive impact on the citizens; 97 percent of rural Cambodia is without running water or sanitation facilities and 58 percent of Cambodia's population is under the age of 18.

In very hot temperatures - and one case within 10 feet of a pig sty -- the cadets worked with local foremen and craftsmen, digging drainage holes for concrete septic cylinders, laying foundations with rock and concrete, building brick walls, mixing concrete in open pits by hand and stuccoing walls with concrete. Each latrine was

equipped with a large compartment for a fresh water cistern to contain rinse water, covered with a corrugated steel roof and given a wooden door.

The cadets completed their first set of two latrines July 4 and sponsored a small party for nearby villages that afternoon to commemorate Independence Day, explain the significance of the day to their new Cambodian friends and answer questions about the United States.

That weekend, the team toured Bokor Mountain, another Cambodian National Park, and visited historical and agricultural centers such as Kampot, famous for peppercorn and durian fruit production, and Pre-Angkorian cave temples. They also visited coastal island fishing villages.

The following week, they moved to a different part of Odong Village to work on two more latrines -- one for a young family and another for a widow and her family of five. While their work was hampered by a monsoon, the cadets still finished the brick and stucco latrines in two days.

The team spent their final day in Cambodia at a local school built with the assistance of a South Korean NGO, now operating on its own with support by Equitable Cambodia, playing soccer with children, teaching them songs and passing out Academy mementos.

"This has sincerely been a formative life experience and I am extremely appreciative for the opportunity," Sanks said. "I cannot give enough thanks to all who were involved to make the trip happen."

France said he's proud of how open the cadets were to experiencing a life vastly different from their own.

"They were great representatives of the Academy and the U.S. military," he said. "They worked hard, building lasting structures and friendships, and learned an enormous amount about the developing world and the organizations trying to help improve the lot of citizens in those countries. I think they realize now and embrace the fact that this is part of the world in which they'll serve as officers and the skills they gained--not just building latrines -- will be of great value once they graduate from USAFA."

Sanks crisply summed up his Cambodian experience.

"Never before have I been so dirty and had so much fun digging a hole," he said.

AAFES FLOWER SHOP: Petals & Blooms is the only flower shop on The Air Force Academy with access to the cadet area. We have had the honor of serving the cadets for the last 7 years and know how important the milestones are in the cadets experience. We are a full service flower shop with cut floral arrangements, plants, gift baskets with your choice of fruits, snacks or baked goods, balloons and stuffed animals. Thank you for your support of our shop and we look forward to serving you for years to come. Kindly, DeNyse/Owner Petals & Blooms (719)-472-8589 petalsnblooms.com.

Helpful Websites:

Cadet Academic Calendar website: (2014/2015 calendar)

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/academics/calendar.asp>

Cadet Curriculum Handbook (which also outlines what summer programs are available for cadets in what year):

<http://www.usafa.edu/df/data/CHB2012-2013.pdf>

Cadet Clubs (just a listing of clubs and POCs, not a schedule of where they may be):

<http://www.usafa.edu/cadetFocus/cadetClubs/>

Admissions: (parents can help us recruit future cadets):

<http://www.academyadmissions.com/>

Sports Schedules:

<http://www.goairforcefalcons.com/calendar/events/>

Association of Graduates and USAFA Endowment:

<http://www.usafa.org/>

PREP SCHOOL INFORMATION:

Below is the Point of Contact for questions for our Prep School Candidate parents.

Contact Mark Winter at (719) 333-2583, mark.winter@usafa.edu and the USAFA website below

<http://www.usafa.edu> Look under Prep School link at top right (7th tab)

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Marie

ROSE MARIE NIKOVITS

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